

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 016139
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DRAFTED BY AF:WESCHAUFLELE,JR.

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 016139

NODIS

FROM THE SECRETARY FOR AMBASSADOR, CAPE TOWN FOR EDMONDSON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIAN NEGOTIATIONS

1. SO FAR WE HAVE ONLY PRESS EXCERPTS OF RICHARD'S STATEMENT IN SALISBURY JANUARY 24 AND HIS INTERVIEW ON RHODESIAN TELEVISION JANUARY 23. WE ALSO AWAITING SMITH'S STATEMENT AT 8:00 P.M. SALISBURY TIME.

2. THE IMPRESSION WE HAVE IS THAT RICHARD'S STATEMENT, IF ACCURATELY REPORTED, CASTS SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF RECONVENING GENEVA. WE RECOGNIZE THIS MAY HAVE BEEN DONE FOR TACTICAL REASONS BUT BELIEVE IT IS BOUND TO LEAD TO INCREASED MILITANCY AMONG NATIONALISTS AND AFRICANS, ESPECIALLY COMING ONLY A FEW DAYS BEFORE MEETING OF OAU LIBERATION COMMITTEE IN LUSAKA AT END OF THIS WEEK.

SECRET

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PAGE 02 STATE 016139

FURTHERMORE SMITH'S PUBLIC STATEMENT MAY BE MORE INTRANSIGENT THAN IT MIGHT OTHERWISE.

3. ACCORDING TO HAWKINS IN CAPE TOWN, SMITH MAINTAINS HE IS NOT BREAKING OFF THE TALKS BUT SEEKING A RETURN TO THE "ANGLO-AMERICAN" PROPOSALS.

4. THEREFORE WE BELIEVE THAT THE US AND UK SHOULD HANDLE
THIS TURN OF EVENTS PRUDENTLY SO AS NOT TO CLOSE THE DOOR

TO OTHER EFFORTS TO RECONVENE GENEVA. WE WOULD WELCOME
FCO VIEWS OF WHAT STEPS THEY ARE CONSIDERING NEXT AND
WHAT RICHARD'S TRAVEL AND CONSULTATION PLANS WILL BE.
IN MEANTIME WE ARE STUDYING OTHER POSSIBILITIES AND MAY
WISH TO SEND SOMEONE TO LONDON FOR CONSULTATION WITHIN THE
NEXT FEW DAYS.

5. WE WILL BE MAKING PUBLIC STATEMENT HERE CITING OUR
INTENTION TO CONTINUE SEARCH FOR PEACEFUL NEGOTIATED
TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE IN GENEVA. WE ARE KEEPING
UK EMBASSY HERE INFORMED AND HOPE FCO WILL DO SAME IN
LONDON.

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